

Excalibur

Everything secret degenerates; nothing is safe that does not show it can bear discussion and publicity
—Lord Acton

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Election results leave status quo

Last week, York students went to the polls to elect a new bunch of student politicians for next year. About 1,300 of 7,000 eligible students cast ballots.

Normally, political scientists would tell you that a jump from a 10 per cent turnout of the potential electorate to 19 per cent in one year is a pretty healthy sign. But don't be misled.

Atkinson students, who accounted for a good share of last year's electorate (although only 40 voted), weren't eligible this time around. Moreover, many of the students who did cast ballots voted for the wrong reasons.

How else do you explain the election of a president with no explicit programme and no clear political aims.

But Anne Scotton's skill and fitness for the presidency as well as her good or bad decisions can only be judged during the course of her term in office. The fact she rates Mouritsen's presidency a good one because there were no major scandals, ought to give you an idea of what to expect, though.

Most votes were cast for the status quo. Keep things as they are. Don't stir up any trouble. Don't interfere with the university's operation. And for heavens sake don't elect a noisy, left-wing activist even if you have to vote for an NDP party worker.

We hope Anne Scotton turns out to be the best student president ever at York, and we promise to help with all the advice we can. We're only worried about one thing. The students who voted for her to do nothing might get upset.

Boycott Portugal's S. African products

Recent events in Portugese Southern Africa indicate quite clearly that white domination is nearing the end of a bloody and costly trail. Anti-government guerrillas in Mozambique have been wreaking havoc on the already strained Portugese economy.

But Canadians, probably without realizing it, are still supporting a racist regime.

Every time we buy a jar of coffee with a well-known brand, we're helping die-hard Portugese imperialists win out over more moderate politicians.

At this very moment, there is a little-reported internal political struggle in Portugal, as forces calling for an end to colonization mount. Their chief argument that the colonial wars are too costly when the economic gains are considered can only be helped by Canadians who refuse to have anything to do with the products of southern Africa.

Every major North American coffee producer uses Angolan beans. The culprits include General Foods, Nestle and Standard Brands, which account for most of the coffee sold in this country.

The Portugese economy is on the road to ruin. Let's give it a little push by boycotting its African products. American companies will stop using them no matter how cheap they are, if they discover their own profit margins declining.



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Michael Lawrence

The freedom of speech: Right or weapon?

Ask six million Jewish corpses what they think of freedom of speech.

Edward Banfield, noted American sociologist, received a rude welcome from a U of T audience last week. Students, many of them black, prevented Banfield from talking by booing and jeering him down from the speaker's platform.

The U of T administration condemned the student action, citing the right of freedom of speech. Banfield, already judged blatantly racist by many of his intellectual peers, was denied this right and the students responsible are awaiting academic sanction.

But when does such "freedom" become perverted, perverted into a dangerous social weapon against a threatened minority? Should a man in a socially powerful position be allowed the right to direct a supple audience in an ugly direction?

Banfield calls himself a scientist, and his racial class theories scientific. Aryan superiority was also supposed to have been scientific and yet, in historical perspective, should those butchered Jews have granted Hitler his right to free speech? And would any of us have supported this "right"?

There are many who argue that although Banfield may be a blatant racist, he must still be extended this "freedom." Would these same people allow Banfield to lecture to their public school children? Certainly a university audience is not as naive as children, yet in a society that largely supports racial bigotry, people like Banfield only reinforce certain citizens' already strong social neuroses.

Freedom of speech does not mean freedom to execute, physically or socially.

Michael Hollett

Ask Martin Luther King, Medger Evans, Salvadore Allende and Alexander Solzhenitsyn what they think of freedom of speech.

The SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) disrupted a Banfield lecture at the U of T recently and made it impossible for him to talk. Are the people expected to first get SDS approval before they attend a meeting?

These are the same policies employed by Brezhnev in Russia and the generals in Greece and Chile. Who is to decide what can and cannot be said in a nation?

Banfield may be a racist; but does it not weaken his cause to have his beliefs exposed to public debate? If Banfield is racist, his statements will make this evident. The SDS, good parents that they are, will not give us the chance to make up our own minds.

This should outrage not only those who attended the meeting but anyone who opposes censorship, because the SDS has taken it upon themselves to determine on what issues we are capable of making intelligent decisions.

When applied at the governmental level, SDS-style thinking like that leads to the closing down of newspapers, burning of books and the imprisonment of critics of the government.

The issue is not what Banfield says but, rather, whether we will be allowed to determine what we wish to hear.

We cannot allow ourselves to be told what we can and cannot hear, be it by the SDS, the government or any other group that attempts to set itself up as the guardian of the people.